

Sara M. O'Connor

33 Glen Avenue

Norwalk, CT 06850

Dear Co-Chairs of the Public Health Committee,

I am writing regarding the Proposed S.B. No. 250 AN ACT CONCERNING ART THERAPY

For the past five years I have worked in a skilled nursing home in Fairfield CT. As a professional Board Certified Art Therapist I have worked on a locked dementia neighborhood and have drawn on my education to help me assist my clients. Although we get dementia education classes within the home, there are many situations that require skilled patience, training and understanding with this population. I rely on my art therapy interventions and tools to assist my clients.

As an Art Therapist, I watch the choices my residents make, with different mediums that are offered, the colors they choose and how they use them. To the untrained eye this doesn't mean much but to an Art Therapist it speaks volumes. Various forms of art can provide unspoken avenues of expression and using the proper training feelings can be explored.

I provide a variety of art guided programs within the home I work. The residents are sometimes amazed of what they can do. With the correct support the residents can glow with pride. Their artistic expressions often promote stories, which lead to forgotten memories that can spark various conversations. As a trained therapist I can guide my residents, as well as the volunteers, to keep the experience positive.

I am writing in support of Bill SB 250. Art Therapy Licensure in the state of CT would protect the clients, residents, and their families from people who are not properly trained to provide any form of art therapy or therapy associated with counseling.

Sincerely,

Sara M. O'Connor ATR-BC